

Justice Court

Department Overview

Justice Court is the court responsible for the original jurisdiction of all civil and criminal cases outside of the City of Bozeman. The courts provide an effective and efficient court system for the residents of the county. The courts accomplish this while being fiscally responsible within the budget allocated to them.

For FY 2011 the Justice Court continues with two (2) full time Justice of the Peace as approved in FY 2005. The courts operate below the authorized budget for Personnel and Operations.

The Justice Court has seen a 25% increase in cases filed since 2000. At the same time Justice Court Collections have increased from \$957,895 to \$1,844,336.90 in calendar year 2008, which is a significant increase in revenue. Unfortunately a significant portion of these revenues are transferred to the State. The increase in cases and fines is a direct result of an increase in law enforcement officers, significant increases in the number of debt filings and the legislative increase of the monetary limit for civil suits to \$7,000.

Another factor in increased workload is the number of residents in the county and the increased reliance on courts for satisfaction. The economy has also played a part in the rise of our civil filings. More people are filing for monies due them.

The redistribution in 2009 of the workload between Department One and Two Justice's of the Peace has worked well for the county and the court.

Department Goals

- To establish an effective, efficient court that is easily accessible to the public.
- To insure that employees are well trained, helpful, friendly and accurate in their dealings with the public.
- Bailiff's presence during Law & Motion.
- Use Video Arraignments and Web-Cam whenever appropriate.
- Participated in Bi-Annual training for the Judges.
- Encourage bi-annual training for Clerks.
- Enlarge second Courtroom to a size allowing for full utilization.

Recent Accomplishments

- Activated Comprehensive Case Management Software with Jury Module which has helped to expedite the yearly Jury Summons process.
- Staff professionalism pursued by the Office Manager.
- Mediation in civil Matters with 85% settlement on cases mediated.
- Court has worked to facilitate the increased caseload in a smooth and efficient manner.
- Continued on the job training for clerks on a twice a year basis.
- Video Arraignments in both courtrooms.
- Scanning documents for easy retrieval/emailing.
- We are working to get Web-cam installed on our current video system. This would allow litigant so appear via the video system when they do not live in Bozeman and the surrounding area.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Justice Court

Department Budget

Object of Expenditure	Actual FY 2009	Final FY 2010	Actual FY 2010	Request FY 2011	Preliminary FY 2011	Final FY 2011
Personnel	\$ 524,749	\$ 517,581	\$ 507,345	\$ 525,358	\$ 534,772	\$ 535,637
Operations	116,855	132,954	98,128	129,087	129,087	129,087
Debt Service	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Outlay	-	16,709	-	20,000	20,000	20,000
Transfers Out	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$ 641,604	\$ 667,244	\$ 605,473	\$ 674,445	\$ 683,859	\$ 684,724

Budget by Fund Group

General Fund	\$ 641,604	\$ 667,244	\$ 605,473	\$ 674,445	\$ 683,859	\$ 684,724
Special Revenue Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Debt Service Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Project Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enterprise Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Internal Service Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trust & Agency Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$ 641,604	\$ 667,244	\$ 605,473	\$ 674,445	\$ 683,859	\$ 684,724

Funding Sources

Tax Revenues	\$ 95,564	\$ 57,573	\$ 56,422	\$ 100,594	\$ 98,975	\$ 104,782
Non-Tax Revenues	557,471	595,688	513,813	563,102	573,767	573,767
Cash Reappropriated	(11,431)	13,983	35,238	10,749	11,117	6,175
Total	\$ 641,604	\$ 667,244	\$ 605,473	\$ 674,445	\$ 683,859	\$ 684,724

Department Personnel

No. of Positions	FT/PT	Title	FTE
2	Full-Time	Justice of the Peace	2
1	Full-Time	Executive Secretary	1
8	Full-Time	Justice Court Clerks	8

Total Program 11

Justice Court

2011 Budget Highlights

Personnel

- Office position of Jury Master/Filing Clerk changed back to Justice Court Clerk to help maintain the current work load.

Operations

- Decrease in operations from decrease in Fixed Costs.

Capital

- Capital Reserves \$20,000 for replacement of copier/printers in 2011 or 2012.

County Commission Goals/Department Response

The County Commission established a set of overarching goals for the County government. Listed below are the County Commission's goals, followed by the methods by which Justice Court is striving to fulfill those goals.

Exceptional Customer Service

- Customer service in a courteous, professional and friendly manner.
- Prompt, accurate and timely processing of cases filed.
- Civil Judgments entered in a timely manner.
- General Temporary Orders of Protection are ruled upon and issued on the same date they are received in court.

Be Model for Excellence in Government

- Effective, efficient court easily accessible to the public.

Improve Communications

- Access to Website.

To be the Employer of Choice

- Provide professional development to staff.

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WORKLOAD INDICATORS / PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Workload Indicators		Actual	Actual	Estimate	Projected
Indicator		FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
1.	Cases filed	13,500	12,500	14,000	13,500
2.	Court collections	1,850,000	1,950,000	2,950,000	2,000,000

Performance Measures		Actual	Actual	Estimate	Projected
Measure		FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
1.	Video arraignments	1,550	1,700	1,850	2,000
2.	Law and Motion	4,800	5,000	6,200	6,500
3.	Judge Trials	2,050	2,100	2,150	2,200
4.	Jury Trials	462	462	463	465
5.	Mediations	208	208	208	208
6.	Hearings	2,400	2,600	2,800	3,000
7.	Omnibus Hearings	1950	2,050	2,150	2,300

Comments